



AES Team:

The Holiday Season provides a great opportunity for reflection, as we take stock in what we have accomplished and look back with a sense of satisfaction on how far we have come since we started last August.

You are part of a greater calling as “plank holders” in Afghanistan Engineer District – South (AES). When our Chief Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp made the decision to stand up a second district in Afghanistan last spring, it was based on the projected growth in the southern and western part of the country. At the time there was an estimated work load of about \$ 1 billion spanning three to four years. No one really had an appreciation for how the workload would grow as U.S. and Coalition Forces began to move into RC-South and RC-West.

In the past 10 months, RC-South and RC-West have seen major growth. U.S. forces have built eight cities, two that house more than 10,000 service members while the other six have populations near two to three thousand each. This growth does not happen without major engineering effort and deliberate planning. In AES the planning process also includes 17 different nations, each with varying approaches to troop mission, movement and integration into the holistic picture of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) commander’s counter insurgency strategy.

AES has had the unique opportunity of providing critical engineering support to operational commanders throughout the region. While building our own capacity to execute a program of over \$1 billion in FY10 alone – AES also has the potential to increase by more than \$500 million with additional military construction (MILCON) and Afghanistan National Security Forces work. This potential work includes a civil/infrastructure program for the Helmand River Valley Refurbishment and the Kajiki Dam Power Generation and Transmission System. There is a lot of work to be done and the AES team is answering the call.

AES continues to be tenacious in efforts to impel the Afghan contractors through the struggles and challenges they confront with construction execution in Afghanistan. We are recognized for our engineering expertise, providing critical support to the garrisons and the war fighters at Kandahar Air Field and across the entire South and West Regions of Afghanistan. The AES staff is beginning to see growth and increased productivity as we take on an increased work load. This is truly an exciting time to be a member of the newest USACE District. Thank you to all of the dedicated employees serving here in Afghanistan, and to your supporting families and friends back in the states.

Happy Holidays.

Colonel Kevin J. Wilson

